

City of Zirndorf relies on GDPR-compliant business messenger

Making communication from public authorities simply easier





How do public officials and other employees of a public authority and municipality communicate today? For the City of Zirndorf, this question marked the beginning of a journey to a more mobile digital communication. Along for the journey: the business messenger of Teamwire.

Initial situation

Communication in times of the Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

When the German Data Protection Regulation (DSGVO/GDPR) came into force, imposing data protection requirements on government communications, Richard Lippmann, IT Manager at the City of Zirndorf, investigated the question: How do employees of the municipal council actually communicate? At that time, around two-thirds of the workforce worked primarily in the office, while the remaining employees



“Mobile communication via WhatsApp unfortunately no longer met the legal requirements. A GDPR-compliant, secure and for the users attractive solution was needed.”

– Richard Lippmann, IT Manager at the City of Zirndorf

were mostly on the road working in the city. Instead of the presumed e-mail communication, which can only be used in the office due to VPN access, communication outside of the city hall - especially in the field - took place via WhatsApp. Employees took photos on site, sent them around and created various groups to exchange information.

What a mobile communication solution must bring to the table

After an initial and yet far too costly attempt to develop a proprietary messenger on an open source basis, further testing of a directly usable secure standard messenger followed. After both solutions failed to meet the IT requirements, the City of Zirndorf decided to go with Teamwire.

In contrast to the open source approach and the out-of-the-box solution tested, Teamwire scored with central administration and user management, allowing users to be identified across multiple devices. In addition, Teamwire offered professional customer service and support, which the IT manager and his four-

Why is WhatsApp inappropriate for professional communication?

Here is the answer!





person IT team also urgently wanted to be able to handle the messenger roll-out in parallel with their day-to-day business. In terms of price, there was hardly any difference between standard products on the business messaging market. Therefore, the numerous useful features, the GDPR compliance and the simple as well as intuitive usability were ultimately the criteria in which Teamwire scored best by far.

“Where the market sets a pricing like that, the messenger choice may seem simple, but the features make the difference. And here Teamwire was absolutely convincing.”

– Richard Lippmann

Requirements

Convenient user administration for seamless interaction

For user management, central administration and group creation - such as all persons working in the town hall being part of the group “Rathaus_alle” - was just as much a requirement as the possibility for employees to create groups themselves and organize themselves

independently. Teamwire offers a clear assignment of users in the user administration - no matter with which and how many end devices they communicate via the messenger. Teamwire offers a frictionless exchange of information and simple interaction across all offices and functional areas.

Messenger open source or out-of-the-box?

Discover the checklist here!





Find out what a messenger can do for internal crisis communication here!



Mobile communication solution on reliable infrastructure

Another requirement for the communication solution was to outsource hosting. Although it would be possible

internally to maintain Teamwire on the servers of the Zirndorf city council, in the event of a technical failure it would have been essential to be able to use a disconnected channel. But in the event of a technical failure, it is required to be able to use a disconnected channel so that the employees of the city council can continue to be reached - then just mobile - when other communication channels are cut off. Especially in crisis and emergency situations, such as technical breakdowns or even hacker attacks, a mobile messenger and an infrastructure that protects it to the highest degree ensures fast and reliable communication. That's why the decision was made to use Teamwire's German cloud.

“Acting lawfully is an undisputed maxim in public authorities, a fact that Teamwire takes into account one hundred percent. The reference case with the Bavarian police has convinced us here in particular.”

– Richard Lippmann

Implementation

Roll-out in just two months

After a short onboarding process, the app could be downloaded conveniently and free of charge from the App- or Playstore and installed in a self-explanatory manner. The structure of the app is just as intuitive



as the employees were used to from WhatsApp. All relevant pre-settings were made centrally by the IT department beforehand, so that the city authorities' communication could be completely switched over to Teamwire within just two months. General training was not even necessary due to the high user-friendliness and ease of use of the messenger - a manual provided by Mr. Lippman was sufficient. In general, the IT manager as contact person was hardly confronted with any questions.

“The roll-out went absolutely smoothly and employees quickly adopted Teamwire.”

– Richard Lippmann

Big plus: Teamwire's experience and expertise

During the implementation phase, the decision in favor of an established service provider with a mature product that has been on the market for several years proved to be a good one. At Teamwire, customers meet experience - starting with competent customer support, which other providers sometimes do not even provide, to personal and proactive contact

persons, from whom one can still learn a lot of new things about the messenger. Richard Lippmann is happy about every impulse that Teamwire can provide. The city of Zirndorf particularly appreciates the fact that it has a German company with a dedicated team at its side, which has already thought ahead to the topic of API.

The use case reveals how the Bavarian police uses Teamwire.

Download here!





“Behind Teamwire are real people who understand me. I’m not just communicating with a ticketing system.”

– Richard Lippmann

Third-party system connection via a chatbot

For more than 1000 services in the IT area, the City of Zirndorf uses the monitoring system PRTG. Via API interface, warning messages about failures are immediately sent to the responsible employees. A Teamwire chatbot acts as the “deliverer” of the bad news - when the service is up and running again, it also transmits the positive message. For this purpose, the Teamwire experts developed an individual solution together with Lippmann: This involved creating a group, named “IT Emergency”, which consists of the respective employees and the chatbot. The chatbot is programmed with a rule-based query so that it triggers a password-protected form in specially programmed software when a defined event is entered. This in turn ensures that all employees in the “IT emergency” group are notified in real time to follow up on the problem.

“If one of our important IT services is down, the bot set up will transmit the message directly via Teamwire to the persons who need to be informed.”

– Richard Lippmann



Outcome

Networking of mobile and office employees

Teamwire has been in use at the City of Zirndorf since spring 2021. Around one hundred users from all areas - town hall, tourist information, youth center, fire department, nursery, building yard and adult education center - are actively using the messenger, and the trend is growing. The employees of the the City of Zirndorf primarily use the option to exchange text and image messages easily and securely. The Bibert Bad Zirndorf uses Teamwire for duty scheduling, for example. In the town hall, Teamwire is predominantly used as an information channel to inform public officials about current events, particularly in the technical and IT areas. But the number of users is expected to increase further. The fact that a generational change is currently taking place in the city administration and younger employees are increasingly taking up their duties makes the use of a business messenger like Teamwire all the more attractive. Here, the mobile and desktop app in conjunction with group chats ensure optimal accessibility of colleagues - whether in the office or on the move. This means that meetings can be called at short notice via video call or video conference, or important information can be quickly and reliably communicated to those concerned in the form of text, image or voice messages. The chat history remains intact even if the end device is changed.

“The key is that documentation can be done via Teamwire on the mobile device and then easily edited and sent in the desktop app.”

– Richard Lippmann



Conclusion

Employees of the city digitally connected - simple, secure and GDPR-compliant

Teamwire runs both on official devices and via encrypted app containers on private smartphones if employees do not have an official device. However, professional communication takes place exclusively via the messenger because this is where exactly the right contacts can be found in the address book. This separation ensures optimal compliance with data protection requirements. Now, the communication of the City of Zirndorf runs in compliance with the GDPR (DSGVO), comfortably and quickly - and connects all employees with each other, regardless of their work location.

“Teamwire makes my life and the lives of my colleagues much easier.”

– Richard Lippmann





ZIRNDORF CITY PROFILE

Industry: municipal authorities, city councils

Organization size: 300 employees

Objectives: mobile communication in accordance with data protection and compliance with a user management system that is easy to use

Challenge: official team communication via consumer apps, GDPR compliance, user management

Results: simplified communication processes, integration of monitoring systems thanks to chatbot, high user acceptance

Get to know the
Teamwire
messenger for
public authorities
now!



Checklist

What authorities and the public sector should consider when choosing a messenger

1. Data sovereignty and data security

Data should be hosted by a German provider in an ISO 27001-certified data center and guarantee full encryption to ensure compliance with GDPR and the Federal Data Protection Act.

2. Sovereignty over user administration

Only the IT officer or IT administrator should manage the communication solution to ensure that individual compliance requirements for public authorities are met and security gaps are eliminated.

3. Integrated communication

It should be possible to link autonomous authorities with external equivalent institutions in other cities or with security authorities to establish overarching communication and thus more effective cooperation.

4. Third-party system connection and automation

It should be possible to connect third-party systems bidirectionally via open API interfaces to simplify the exchange of information and to specifically automate previously manual processes (e.g., on-site notes, scanning of identification documents, etc.).



Contact us!

With its business messenger of the same name, Teamwire GmbH specializes in secure, fast and sovereign exchange via text and voice messages as well as video telephony for companies, public authorities, blue-light organizations and the healthcare sector. Teamwire enables productive communication by connecting mobile employees and office workers with each other and with external contacts such as partners and customers. The messenger offers features specifically designed to meet the needs of organizations, allows for professional administration, ensures the highest security requirements and complies with all European data protection requirements and the GDPR.

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